

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 85th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2005

A Bill

SENATE BILL 431

4
5 By: Senator Salmon
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7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE ARKANSAS PHARMACEUTICAL
9 CONNECTION PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
10

Subtitle

11 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE ARKANSAS
12 PHARMACEUTICAL CONNECTION PROGRAM.
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17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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19 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 20, Chapter 77 is amended to add a new
20 subchapter to read as follows:

21 20-77-1601. Findings.

22 The General Assembly finds that:

23 (1) Affordability is a critical component to ensuring access to
24 prescription drugs for Arkansas residents;

25 (2) Pharmaceutical manufacturers, seeing a need for
26 manufacturer-sponsored prescription drug assistance programs, have created
27 charitable programs to aid low-income seniors and the uninsured with the cost
28 of prescription drugs; and

29 (3) Many of the low-income seniors and the uninsured are unaware
30 of these programs and do not know how to apply for or need assistance in
31 applying for these programs.

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33 20-77-1602. Definitions.

34 As used in this subchapter:

35 (1) "Federal poverty guidelines" means the poverty guidelines as
36 published in the federal register by the United States Department of Health



1 and Human Services as they existed on January 1, 2005; and

2 (2) "Manufacturer-sponsored prescription drug assistance
3 program" means a program offered by a pharmaceutical manufacturer through
4 which the manufacturer provides a drug or drugs to eligible persons at no
5 charge or at a discounted cost.

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7 20-77-1603. Program established.

8 (a) The Arkansas Pharmaceutical Connection Program is established to
9 help seniors and the uninsured in accessing all manufacturer-sponsored
10 prescription drug assistance programs and other programs for which they would
11 qualify including, but not limited to, Medicare Part D prescription drug
12 coverage.

13 (b) The Department of Human Services shall administer the program and
14 shall utilize a toll-free telephone number and website as the point of
15 contact for those eligible to participate in the program.

16 (c) Eligibility shall be limited to residents of the state who:

17 (1) Have a gross income that does not exceed two hundred fifty
18 percent (250%) of the federal poverty guidelines;

19 (2) Have no prescription drug coverage other than Medicare Part
20 D; and

21 (3) Have not voluntarily canceled a state or federal
22 prescription drug program or a private prescription reimbursement plan within
23 six (6) months prior to application to enroll in the program.

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25 20-77-1604. Operation of program

26 (a) The Department of Human Services shall provide assistance to
27 persons determined to be eligible for services authorized by this subchapter.
28 The assistance provided shall include:

29 (1) Assisting persons in accessing manufacturer-sponsored
30 prescription drug assistance programs for which they are or may be eligible;

31 (2) Assisting persons in applying for manufacturer-sponsored
32 prescription drug assistance programs for which they are or may be eligible;

33 (3) Disseminating information about and advertising available
34 programs that can provide assistance with obtaining prescription drugs at a
35 lower cost; and

36 (4) Assisting persons in comparing Medicare Part D drug plans

1 and in applying for the plan best suited for their needs.

2 (b)(1) The department may seek and receive voluntary moneys, including
3 grants and gifts to assist with the implementation of the Arkansas
4 Pharmaceutical Connection Program.

5 (2) The department shall include within the development of the
6 program the assistance of foundations, independent and chain community
7 pharmacists, volunteers, state agencies, community groups, area agencies on
8 aging, corporations, hospitals, physicians, and any other entity that can
9 further the intent of the program.

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11 20-77-1605. Reporting

12 The Department of Human Services shall prepare and submit an annual
13 report on the Arkansas Pharmaceutical Connection Program to the Governor,
14 President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives,
15 and the Joint Interim Committee on Public Health, Welfare and Labor. This
16 report shall include the number of clients served, the number of
17 prescriptions filled and refilled, and the value of the drugs and services
18 provided.

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